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SUBJECT: GLOBE ESTONIA BENEFITS EXCEED PROGRAM
EXPECTATIONS

¶1. (U) Summary. A ceremony marking the 10th anniversary of the GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) program in Estonia recently demonstrated this grassroots program's effectiveness not only as a tool for increasing awareness and interest in science and the environment, but also in promoting integration of ethnic Russian minorities and encouraging cross-border cooperation. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Over the last decade, Estonia has been one of the most active GLOBE countries in Europe. This has remained true despite only ad hoc funding from the Embassy. SEED program funding for Estonia ended in 2004; however, the GOE continues to fund the program. From time to time, the Embassy has lobbied on behalf of GLOBE whenever its GOE line-item budget faced cutbacks.

¶3. (U) In mid-August, 90 students and 25 teachers from 27 Russian and Estonian-speaking schools throughout Estonia celebrated Estonia GLOBE's 10th anniversary by participating in a three day program in Narva-Joesuu. The event was organized by a Russian-speaking Estonian school and integration was an underlying theme. Students and teachers interacted throughout the event in Estonian, English and Russian. For many participants, this was their first trip to Narva-Joesuu, which is located near the border with Russia, in a predominantly Russian-speaking region of Estonia. At the conclusion of the event, many students expressed a desire to return to the area with their families to take a deeper look into the region.

¶4. (U) Ambassador Wos addressed students and teachers during the opening ceremony for the three-day program. She praised GLOBE Estonia's success and highlighted USG program contributions. She commended GLOBE's usefulness in bringing students from Russia and Estonia together for a common purpose. The Ambassador further encouraged students to pursue educational opportunities in the United States.

¶5. (U) A highlight of the event was the participation of two students and the Vice-Director from St. Petersburg Math Lyceum, the Russian school that GLOBE Estonia hopes to help incorporate into the international program. Their involvement was possible thanks to a \$700 grant issued by the Copenhagen Regional Environmental Office. The students from St. Petersburg took an active part in student events and the Vice-Director participated in discussions concerning future cooperation.

16. (U) During the course of the anniversary weekend GLOBE Coordinator Dr. Ulle Kikas of Tartu University, teachers, and members of the Estonian GLOBE alumni organization met to discuss the future of the program. Participants noted that although Estonia has been an active GLOBE partner for ten years, it has become more challenging to maintain teacher and student motivation. Discussions resulted in ideas about how to keep students and educators excited, including introducing new programs like Cloud-Sat (an experiment to observe clouds and compare the data from satellites) and combining the GLOBE program into a very popular existing outdoor learning program.

17. (U) Comment. Estonia GLOBE has demonstrated that it offers unique opportunities beyond its intended science programs. Post will continue to look for ways to support Estonia GLOBE's efforts to promote cross-border cooperation and integration. Further, as Program Coordinator Kikas nears retirement, we plan to closely observe the Ministry of Education's efforts to recruit her replacement.

GOLDSTEIN